

# antipresse.net

A Swiss media criticism website that has published misleading and false claims, including misinformation on vaccines and COVID-19.



**Proceed with caution: This website severely violates basic journalistic standards.**

## Ownership and Financing










Antipresse is owned by INAT Sàrl, a communications company based in Sion, Switzerland. According to the Registries of Commerce of Switzerland, INAT is owned by Slobodan Despot, a Swiss author and translator of Serbo-Croatian descent, who regularly contributes content on Antipresse.

Despot also owns the Sion-based publishing company Editions Xenia, whose slogan is “Dare read what we dare publish!” (Osez lire ce que nous osons éditer!). Editions Xenia primarily publishes the works of anti-establishment and controversial authors, such as U.S. anarchist Theodore J. Kaczynski, known as the Unabomber - a convicted terrorist who sent mail bombs to various locations in the U.S. between the late 1970s and the 1990s - and far-right French writer Renaud Camus.

From 2013 to 2017, Despot worked as the communications adviser for Oskar Freysinger, a former member of the State Council of the Canton of Valais, Switzerland, and one of the local leaders of the nationalist Swiss People’s Party (UDC). In 2020, Despot began a blog on the website of French weekly Marianne, where he comments on the COVID-19 pandemic.

Antipresse derives revenue from subscriptions and donations. It does not carry advertising.

**Score: 20/100**

-  Does not repeatedly publish false content (22points)
-  Gathers and presents information responsibly (18)
-  Regularly corrects or clarifies errors (12.5)
-  Handles the difference between news and opinion responsibly (12.5)
-  Avoids deceptive headlines (10)
-  Website discloses ownership and financing (7.5)
-  Clearly labels advertising (7.5)
-  Reveals who's in charge, including any possible conflicts of interest (5)
-  The site provides names of content creators, along with either contact or biographical information (5)

*Criteria are listed in order of importance.*

[More information.](#)

## Content

Antipresse.net (which in French means “anti-press”) explains on its About page that the publication “was born out of our feeling of suffocation and disarray in front of the constant impoverishment of news coming from the mainstream media, the decline of its language and style, its intellectual incoherence, its bias that has become structural, and its concerning distancing from

the reality of most people.” (“L’Antipresse est née de notre sentiment d’étouffement et de désarroi face à l’appauvrissement constant de l’information des médias de grand public, au déclin de leur langue et de leur style, à leur incohérence intellectuelle, à leur parti pris devenu structurel, à leur éloignement préoccupant de la réalité vécue par la plupart des gens.”)

Antipresse publishes blog posts and commentary on topics including European geopolitics, technology, media and literary criticism. On its homepage, the site describes itself as an “e-magazine in your email box every Sunday morning.” This weekly newsletter, called Le Drone (The Drone), is also published in the forms of articles on the website. Most of the content is only accessible to paying subscribers.

Antipresse regularly criticizes how Swiss and European news organizations cover the news, although the About page also states the site is not necessarily against the media. “L’Antipresse is not against the press, but outside of it,” the site writes. “Its mission is not to dispel media clichés, but to broaden perspectives on topics that concern us all.” (“L’Antipresse n’est pas contre la presse, mais à l’extérieur. Sa mission n’est pas de réfuter les lieux communs médiatiques, mais d’élargir les perspectives sur les choses qui nous concernent tous.”)

The site's content often aligns with anti-establishment and protectionist views, taking strong stances against modernism, globalization, and European Union policies.

Typical headlines include “Swiss media and coronavirus: Stop feeding fear” (“Médias suisses et coronavirus: cesser de nourrir la peur”) “New York Times, the spiral of obscurantism” (“New York Times, la spirale de l’obscurantisme”); and “Bernard Dugué: Covid-19, a derailment of scientific modernism” (“Bernard Dugué: Covid-19, un déraillement de la modernité scientifique”).

---

#### Credibility

Antipresse often publishes content that cites reliable sources, such as Le Monde, Bloomberg and Reuters. However, it also quotes, and republishes, articles from

websites known for publishing false information, such as anti-vaccine site [ChildrensHealthDefense.org](http://ChildrensHealthDefense.org) and Russian sites Sputnik News and RT France.

Antipresse has republished false and misleading information about vaccines and the COVID-19 pandemic. In April 2020, for example, the site promoted false claims that the COVID-19 pandemic was an excuse to implant people with microchips.

The article, quoting comments that retired Russian tennis star Marat Safin made in an April 2020 interview with Russian sports news site Sports.Ru, said, “Marat Safin sees it [the pandemic] only as a pretext for universal chipping.” The article quoted Safin as saying, “I think they are preparing people to be implanted with chips. Back in 2015, Bill Gates said we will have a pandemic, that the next enemy is a virus, not a nuclear war. They did a simulation at the Davos forum of what it would be like. I don’t think Bill Gates is a prophet, he just knew.” (“Je pense qu’on prépare les gens à être pucés. Bill Gates a déclaré en 2015 que nous aurions une pandémie, que le prochain ennemi serait un virus, et non une guerre nucléaire. Ils ont simulé tout cela au forum de Davos pour voir comment cela allait se passer. Je ne pense pas que Bill Gates soit un prophète — il le savait, c’est tout.”)

In the original Sports.ru article, the Russian publication warned its readers that it did not support Safin’s false theories about the pandemic - a caveat that Antipresse did not include in its own article.

The Antipresse article misrepresented research funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. A paper published in the journal *Science Translational Medicine* in December 2019 by researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, with funding from Gates’ philanthropic foundation, described a developing technology that can keep a vaccination record on a patient’s skin with an ink-like injection that could be read by smartphone. However, this research is unrelated to COVID-19, the study’s lead researcher, Kevin McHugh, told [FactCheck.org](http://FactCheck.org). Bill Gates denied the claim in a June 2020 call with journalists, stating,

"I've never been involved in any sort of microchip-type thing.... It's almost hard to deny this stuff because it's so stupid or strange."

In a 2015 TED Talk titled "The next outbreak? We're not ready," Gates, the Microsoft co-founder, did say that the greatest risk of global catastrophe in the next few decades is most likely to be a highly infectious virus, rather than a nuclear war. However, there is no evidence that he knew in advance about the COVID-19 outbreak, as the Antipresse article quoted Safin as saying.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the World Economic Forum participated in a simulated emergency preparedness exercise in October 2019, but the exercise was hypothetical and involved a mock coronavirus with different features than the COVID-19 virus, according to FactCheck.org and video recordings of the event.

"For the scenario, we modeled a fictional coronavirus pandemic, but we explicitly stated that it was not a prediction," the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security, which co-hosted the event, said in a January 2020 statement. "Instead, the exercise served to highlight preparedness and response challenges that would likely arise in a very severe pandemic." Contrary to what the article also claimed, the event took place in New York, and not at the Davos economic forum.

In April 2020, Antipresse republished an article that was written by anti-vaccine advocate Robert F. Kennedy Jr. for his advocacy group, Childrens Health Defense. The article claimed, "Indian doctors blame the Gates campaign for a devastating non-polio acute flaccid paralysis (NPAFP) epidemic that paralyzed 490,000 children beyond expected rates between 2000 and 2017. In 2017, the Indian government dialed back Gates' vaccine regimen and asked Gates and his vaccine policies to leave India." ("Les médecins indiens attribuent à la campagne de M. Gates une épidémie dévastatrice de [paralysie flasque aiguë non due à la polio (NPAFP) qui a paralysé 490 000 enfants au-delà des taux attendus entre 2000 et 2017... En 2017, le

gouvernement indien a mis fin au programme de vaccination de M. Gates et a demandé à ce dernier de quitter l'Inde avec sa politique de vaccination.”)

There is no evidence that connects the Gates Foundation to an epidemic in India of acute flaccid paralysis, which is a form of paralysis unrelated to poliovirus. Between 2000 and 2017, the World Health Organization only reported 17 cases of vaccine-derived poliovirus cases in India. In addition, the Gates Foundation was not kicked out of India, and continues its work to support the development of low-cost vaccines in the country, according to its website.

Kennedy's article also stated that “in 2014, the Gates Foundation funded tests of experimental HPV vaccines, developed by GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) and Merck, on 23,000 young girls in remote Indian provinces. Approximately 1,200 suffered severe side effects, including autoimmune and fertility disorders. Seven died.” (“En 2014, la Fondation Gates a financé des tests de vaccins expérimentaux contre le HPV, développés par Glaxosmithkline (GSK) et Merck, sur 23 000 jeunes filles dans des provinces indiennes éloignées. Environ 1200 d'entre elles ont souffert d'effets secondaires graves, notamment de troubles auto-immuns et de troubles de la fertilité. Sept sont mortes.”)

India's government did investigate the deaths of seven girls in 2009 and 2010 who participated in a trial of the vaccines Gardasil and Cervarix, which are used to prevent cervical cancer. The trial was conducted by the U.S.-based global health organization Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH), which has received funding from the Gates Foundation.

Investigators appointed by the Indian government concluded in 2011 that the organization had no responsibility for the girls' deaths. A report by the investigators concluded, “There is no common pattern to the deaths that would suggest they were caused by the vaccine. In cases where there was an autopsy, death certificate, or medical records, the cause of death could be explained by factors other than the vaccine.”

There is also no evidence that 1,200 girls suffered severe side effects from the trial. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the vaccines Gardasil and Cervarix went through years of extensive safety testing before they were licensed. They can have side effects, which are mild and go away quickly, the CDC says.

In December 2019, the site published an article that challenged the findings of a report by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), which found evidence that a chlorine attack took place in Douma, Syria, on April 7, 2018. Shortly after the attack, the U.S. and its allies launched missile strikes targeting suspected chemical weapons facilities in Syria.

“How long will it take for the U.S. and its allies to admit having pressured the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to obtain reports justifying the bombing of Syria in 2018? Thanks to a leak to WikiLeaks from an expert at the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), it is now known that the alleged chemical attack on Douma by the Syrian regime did not take place and that it was staged,” the article claimed, citing Sputnik News. (“Combien de temps faudra-t-il pour que les USA et leurs alliés admettent avoir fait pression sur l’Organisation pour l’interdiction des armes chimiques (OIAC) en vue d’obtenir des rapports justifiant le bombardement de la Syrie en 2018 ? Grâce à une fuite à Wikileaks d’un expert de l’Organisation pour l’interdiction des armes chimiques (OIAC), on sait maintenant que la prétendue attaque chimique de Douma par le régime syrien n’a pas eu lieu et qu’elle a été mise en scène.”)

The leak that the article refers to was an internal email sent by an OPCW employee in June 2018, which was publicly released by WikiLeaks in November 2019. It does not support the claim that the attack was staged. Rather, the email described internal concerns about the likely source of the chemical, which were publicly taken

into account in OPCW's 2019 final report, according to EU vs. Disinfo, a fact-checking website run by European Union's East Stratcom Task Force.

The final OPCW report on the Douma attack concluded, "Witnesses' testimonies, environmental and biomedical samples analysis results, toxicological and ballistic analyses from experts, additional digital information from witnesses—provide reasonable grounds that the use of a toxic chemical as a weapon took place." Claims that Syria did not use chemical weapons on its citizens in Douma have also been contradicted by first-person accounts, photos, and videos documenting the victims, and reports from the United Nations and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Because Antipresse has promoted debunked and unsubstantiated claims, including about COVID-19, NewsGuard has determined that the site repeatedly publishes false content, fails to gather and present information responsibly, and does not avoid deceptive headlines.

Antipresse does not publish a corrections policy and NewsGuard only found one correction on the website, dating to 2018. The website has also not issued corrections to false stories such as those cited above, which is why NewsGuard has determined the website does not meet its standard for regularly issuing corrections and clarifications.

Antipresse clearly discloses its critical perspective on mainstream news organizations on its About page and homepage. It also states on the About page that its articles present a "variety of viewpoints" and that "Antipresse is neither on the right nor the left, and even less on the middle."

However, most articles advance strong anti-liberal and anti-globalization views, which the website does not disclose as part of its overall point of view.

For example, in a January 2020 article published in a section called The Sound of Time (Le Bruit du Temps), site owner Slobodan Despot criticized the nationalist



Swiss People's Party (UDC) for not fully implementing its anti-globalist agenda.

“Even Switzerland, the home of direct democracy where the nationalist UDC remains the leading party, applies the directives of globalist dispossession, without major interference,” Despot wrote. “On the contrary: by standing by and allowing its own government minister to sign the most harmful treaties to the country’s sovereignty (such as Mercosur), the UDC has lowered itself to serve as an excuse of a party.” (“Même la Suisse, patrie de la démocratie directe où l’UDC nationaliste demeure le premier parti, applique les directives de la dépossession globaliste sans entrave notable. Au contraire: en tolérant sans broncher que son propre ministre au gouvernement signe les accords les plus néfastes pour la souveraineté du pays (comme le Mercosur), l’UDC s’est réduite au rôle de parti-alibi.”)

In a March 2020 online newsletter, which appeared as a PDF on the site, Despot suggested that liberal countries’ politics were to blame for the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despot wrote, “Now is the time to question why nine-tenths of deaths from the global virus are in the ultraliberal West. Now is the time to admit that societies contaminated by ultra-liberalism will not survive it. After this crisis, the European Union will no longer exist except as an administrative relic from another era, both oppressive and superfluous.” (“C’est le moment de s’interroger pourquoi les neuf dixièmes des morts du virus dans le monde se situent dans l’Occident ultralibéral. C’est le moment d’admettre que les sociétés contaminées par l’ultralibéralisme n’en réchapperont pas. A l’issue de cette crise, l’Union européenne n’existera plus sinon comme une survivance administrative d’un autre temps, à la fois oppressante et superflue.”)

Because Antipresse regularly advances anti-liberal and anti-globalization views that it does not disclose, NewsGuard has determined that the site does not handle the difference between news and opinion responsibly.



Antipresse did not respond to two emails from NewsGuard requesting comment on the articles cited above, the site's approach to corrections and its undisclosed political perspective.

---

#### Transparency

Antipresse discloses on its legal notice page that it is owned by INAT Sàrl. The page identifies Slobodan Despot as its publishing manager and provides his email address. Readers can also message the site via a contact form.

A staff page provides the names and biographies of most Antipresse contributors, including Despot. However, most articles are not attributed to authors, which does not meet NewsGuard's standard for naming content creators.

Antipresse did not respond to two NewsGuard emails seeking comment on the site's failure to provide information about content creators.

The site does not run advertisements.

---

#### History

Publisher Slobodan Despot, along with Jean-François Fournier, former editor in chief of Swiss daily Le Nouvelliste, launched Antipresse as an email newsletter in December 2015. The site was created the same year.

In 2016, Fournier announced that he was leaving the publication to pursue tourism and culture projects.

**Written by:** [Sophia Tewa](#)

**Edited by:** [Amy Westfeldt](#)

**Send feedback to NewsGuard:** [Click Here](#)

---

#### Sources

##### Ownership and Financing

<https://antipresse.net/a-propos/>  
<https://vc.chregister.ch/cr-portal/auszug/auszug.xhtml?uid=CHE-141.725.503>  
<https://vc.chregister.ch/cr-portal/auszug/auszug.xhtml?faces-redirect=true&uid=CHE-141.725.503&amt=VC#>

<https://vc.chregister.ch/cr-portal/auszug/auszug.xhtml?faces-redirect=true&uid=CHE-112.582.880&amt=VC>  
<https://shab.ch/shabforms/servlet/Search?EID=7&DOCID=1252647>  
<https://antipresse.net/faire-un-don/>  
<https://antipresse.net/slobodan-despot/>  
<https://bibliobs.nouvelobs.com/romans/20140306.OBS8734/slobodan-despot-krajina-mon-amour.html>  
<https://www.franceinter.fr/personnes/slobodan-despot>  
<https://editions-xenia.com/a-propos/>  
<https://www.marianne.net/debattons/blogs/coronafoirus>  
<https://antipresse.net/abonnements/>  
<https://www.letemps.ch/suisse/slobodan-despot-lideologue-enigmatique-doskar-freysinger>  
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/antipresse-linfluence-plut%C3%B4t-que-laffluence-slobodan-despot/>  
<https://www.letemps.ch/suisse/slobodan-despot-devient-charge-communication-doskar-freysinger>

---

Content

<https://antipresse.net/a-propos/>  
<https://antipresse.net/turbulence/>  
<https://lincorrect.org/48874-2/>  
[https://antipresse.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Drone\\_047.pdf](https://antipresse.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Drone_047.pdf)  
<https://antipresse.net/en-acces-libre/>  
<https://antipresse.net/le-drone/>  
<https://antipresse.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Antipresse-225.pdf>  
<https://antipresse.net/medias-suisse-et-coronavirus-cesser-de-nourrir-la-peur/>  
<https://antipresse.net/tag/syrie/>  
<https://antipresse.net/new-york-times-la-spirale-de-lobscurantisme/>  
<https://antipresse.net/la-philosophie-dantipresse/>  
<https://antipresse.net/bernard-dugue-covid-19-un-deraillement-de-la-modernite-scientiste/>

---

Credibility

[https://www.liberation.fr/desintox/2016/11/08/le-mythe-de-la-petite-syrienne-qu-on-sauve-tout-le-temps\\_1527024](https://www.liberation.fr/desintox/2016/11/08/le-mythe-de-la-petite-syrienne-qu-on-sauve-tout-le-temps_1527024)  
COVID-19 stories:  
<http://archive.vn/nNtVj>  
<http://archive.vn/iu3Xk>  
<http://archive.vn/Ab0Do>(Bill Gates and chips)

<https://www.sports.ru/tribuna/blogs/nitkina/2767333.htm>

|

[https://www.ted.com/talks/bill\\_gates\\_the\\_next\\_outbreak\\_we\\_re\\_not\\_ready?language=ab](https://www.ted.com/talks/bill_gates_the_next_outbreak_we_re_not_ready?language=ab)

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/factcheck/2020/06/12/fact-check-bill-gates-isnt-planning-implant-microchips-via-vaccines/3171405001/>

<https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/bill-gates-id2020/>

<https://www.centerforhealthsecurity.org/event201/about>

<https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-factcheck-coronavirus-bill-gates-micr/false-claim-bill-gates-planning-to-use-microchip-implants-to-fight-coronavirus-idUSKBN21I3EC>

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/280712488\\_Evaluation\\_de\\_l'efficacite\\_de\\_la\\_pratique\\_du\\_jeune\\_comme\\_pratique\\_a\\_visee\\_preventive\\_ou\\_therapeutique](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/280712488_Evaluation_de_l'efficacite_de_la_pratique_du_jeune_comme_pratique_a_visee_preventive_ou_therapeutique)

<https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/janeltyvynenko/conspiracy-theorists-are-using-a-bill-gates-reddit-ama-to>

<https://www.politifact.com/factchecks/2020/apr/23/facebook-posts/no-democrats-arent-pushing-microchips-fight-corona/>

ation-Event201.html

<https://www.factcheck.org/2020/01/new-coronavirus-wasnt-predicted-in-simulation/>

<http://archive.vn/BZ1vF>(Robert F. Kennedy Jr.)

<https://childrenshealthdefense.org/news/government-corruption/gates-globalist-vaccine-agenda-a-win-win-for-pharma-and-mandatory-vaccination/>

<https://www.politifact.com/factchecks/2020/apr/23/facebook-posts/anti-vaxxers-spread-conspiracy-about-bill-gates-an/>

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-robert-f-kennedy-jr-distorted-vaccine-science1/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/hpv/parents/vaccinesafety.html>

<https://www.letelegramme.fr/coronavirus/infos-rumeurs-fact-checking/non-le-vaccin-contre-la-polio-n-a-pas-paralyse-pres-de-500-000-enfants-en-inde-21-05-2020-12555303.php>

<https://factuel.afp.com/non-le-vaccin-contre-la-polio-promu-par-bill-gates-na-pas-paralyse-pres-de-500-000-enfants-en-inde>

<https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/gates-org-kicked-out-of-india/>

<https://web.archive.org/web/20160912050112/http://icmr.gov.in/final/HPV%20PATH%20final%20report.pdf>

<https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2013/09/indian-parliament-comes-down-hard-cervical-cancer-trial>

<https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/bill-gates-india-sued/>

[http://archive.vn/9k4QU\(Douma\)](http://archive.vn/9k4QU(Douma))

<https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/internal-opcw-e-mail-proves-that-opcws-douma-investigation-is-biased/>

<https://www.opcw.org/media-centre/news/2019/03/opcw-issues-fact-finding-mission-report-chemical-weapons-use-allegation>

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-43762251>

<https://www.france24.com/en/20190613-chemical-weapons-body-probes-leaked-document-syrian-attack>

<https://www.opcw.org/sites/default/files/documents/2019/03/s-1731-2019%28e%29.pdf>

<https://antipresse.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Antipresse-210.pdf>

[http://archive.vn/SrA3n\(MH17\)](http://archive.vn/SrA3n(MH17))

<https://antipresse.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Antipresse-221.pdf>

<https://sputniknews.com/military/202002181078340158-leaked-docs-point-to-no-buk-missile-systems-around-mh17-crash-area-dutch-journo-reveals/>

<https://maxfromthewharf.com/5510-2/>

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/dutch-led-investigators-say-russian-military-missile-shot-down-flight-mh17-over-ukraine-in-2014/2018/05/24/1e2ff92e-5f3c-11e8-8c93-8cf33c21da8d\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/dutch-led-investigators-say-russian-military-missile-shot-down-flight-mh17-over-ukraine-in-2014/2018/05/24/1e2ff92e-5f3c-11e8-8c93-8cf33c21da8d_story.html)

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-51725417>

<https://www.om.nl/onderwerpen/mh17-crash/>

<https://monitoring.bbc.co.uk/product/c201h6vj>

<https://www.polygraph.info/a/leaked-mh17-documents-dont-exonerate-russia/30447940.html>

[https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Pillars-of-Russia%E2%80%99s-Disinformation-and-Propaganda-Ecosystem\\_08-04-20.pdf](https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Pillars-of-Russia%E2%80%99s-Disinformation-and-Propaganda-Ecosystem_08-04-20.pdf)

<https://antipresse.net/sante-jeune-derives-sectaires/>

Erratum <https://antipresse.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Drone-062.pdf>

<https://www.letemps.ch/suisse/rhetorique-russophile-doskar-freysinger>

<https://www.letemps.ch/suisse/droite-pamphletaire-etend-toile-suisse>

<https://www.immorama.ch/articles/interviewdeslobodan-despot/>

<https://antipresse.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Antipresse-214.pdf>

<http://archive.vn/9fBly>

<https://antipresse.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Antipresse-226.pdf>

---

#### Transparency

<https://antipresse.net/contact/>

<https://antipresse.net/a-propos/>

<https://antipresse.net/mentions-legales/>

<https://antipresse.net/a-propos/lequipe/>

---

#### History

<https://www.letemps.ch/suisse/antipresse-discours-numerique-cercle-doskar-freysinger>

<https://lincorrect.org/48874-2/>

<https://www.rts.ch/play/radio/six-heures-neuf-heures-le-samedi/audio/trois-ans-de-lettres-hebdomadaires-pour-lantipresse?id=9984250>

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/loccasion-des-trois-ans-de-lantipresse-ma-lettre-aux-abonn%C3%A9s-despot/>

<https://www.infoimmo.ch/articles/presse-libre-interview/>

<https://antipresse.net/docs/pdf/Question-Suisse.pdf>

<https://lookup.icann.org/lookup>